

A theoretical Study on the Integration of Media and Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing the Sustainability of Ecotourism Projects:

“A case study”

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Résumé: Today the world is witnessing an environmental awareness that is steadily moving towards sustainability in all fields. This awareness is accompanied by fast rapid technological developments. Ecotourism constitutes one of the sustainable domains that many countries of the world are seeking to achieve to preserve their natural and cultural heritage. since the relationship between ecotourism projects and the media is a mutual relationship represented by those projects relying on the media to develop and promote their services, tourists depend on the media to access information , and the more the media is able to meet the needs and desires of tourists and providing them with information , the more capable the become of developing ecotourism projects and maintaining their sustainability . As a result of the media being affected by the accelerating technological revolution, radical and fundamental changes have occurred in its role in all economic sectors, including eco-tourism projects, so that artificial intelligence emerges as a support for the media in the success of its new roles. This research seeks to know the ability of the integration of media with artificial intelligence in enhancing sustainability. Eco-tourism projects taking the Emirati experience as an inspiring model. This study relied on the descriptive analytical approach to describe and analyze the relationship between media and artificial intelligence and the role of this relationship on the sustainability of ecotourism projects in the United Arab Emirates. It aimed to propose a plan to achieve that based on artificial intelligence techniques represented by neural networks, expert systems, smart agents and genetic algorithms (Iliadi, 2023). So that, this study reached a number of results, the most important of which was that the integration of media and artificial intelligence brings benefits to ecotourism projects, such as predicting tourism demand, and encouraging sustainable tourism practices. Given the significance of the UAE as a global tourist destination and its strategic role in economic diversification, this research addresses the critical sustainability challenges arising from rapid tourism growth. It explores how artificial intelligence and media can provide innovative

solutions to enhance tourism efficiency, preserve resources, and promote eco-friendly practices.

Summary:

Today the world is witnessing an environmental awareness that is steadily moving towards sustainability in all fields. This awareness is accompanied by fast rapid technological developments. Ecotourism constitutes one of the sustainable domains that many countries of the world are seeking to achieve to preserve their natural and cultural heritage. since the relationship between ecotourism projects and the media is a mutual relationship represented by those projects relying on the media to develop and promote their services, tourists depend on the media to access information , and the more the media is able to meet the needs and desires of tourists and providing them with information , the more capable the become of developing ecotourism projects and maintaining their sustainability .

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Keywords:

Media, Artificial, Intelligence, Sustainability, Tourism, Ecotourism.

Auteur correspondant: Nom et Prénom

The Introduction:

With the development of the digital age, in which the internet is a dominant medium, economic sectors have turned to incorporating new technologies to sustain the relationship between producer and consumer, and to adapt to the new order of things (Stylianios, 2021).. So that, artificial intelligence technologies have affected media practice, and many media institutions are now using these technologies and benefiting from them in several domains such as data mining and interactive communication with the target audience of the media message, with the aim of providing smarter media tools that are more capable of conveying information and news more quickly to influence targeted audience more efficiently. The intrusion of smart digital technology into the media stage changed the economic concepts and competitive capabilities. .

Thanks to its strategic location, oil revenues, and advancements in air travel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become a prominent tourist destination (Hammad, Ahmad, and Papastathopoulos, 2018). The tourism and travel sector plays a crucial role in supporting the gross domestic product (GDP), creating employment opportunities, increasing foreign exchange revenues, and bolstering economic diversification strategies. These factors are part of the UAE's rapid development, which has positioned it among the countries with the highest per capita income globally. However, the significant expansion of the tourism sector and the rise in international tourist arrivals have contributed substantially to increasing carbon emissions and creating sustainable environmental challenges. This underscores the need to balance the objectives of the tourism sector with ensuring sustainable economic growth by adopting eco-friendly standards (Majumdar and Paris, 2022) .

In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a critical tool for enhancing and streamlining tourism services and operations, making the industry more efficient and less resource-intensive (Tong, Yan, and Manta, 2022; Samala et al., 2020). AI also contributes to achieving a balance between economic growth and the preservation of environmental and cultural resources by introducing innovative and

appealing methods to attract tourists while promoting sustainability in the tourism sector (Kashem et al., 2022) .

Furthermore, AI can be utilized to support the sustainability of tourist destinations in various ways, such as calculating the carrying capacity of resources and tourist sites to prevent overuse and degradation (Gina, 2023) .

In addition, social media plays a significant role in promoting and enhancing the image of eco-tourism destinations, raising tourists' awareness and encouraging responsible behavior (Băcilă et al., 2022). It also fosters trust in the tourism sector (Martínez-Navalón, Gelashvili, and Saura, 2020), effectively contributing to sustainable eco-tourism.

Research Objectives and Importance:

The research examines the impact of media supported by artificial intelligence technologies on the sustainability of eco-tourism projects in the United Arab Emirates. The primary objectives of the research include identifying applications of artificial intelligence in tourism media to achieve integration between media and artificial intelligence. The objectives of this research also include highlighting the role of integration between media and artificial intelligence in supporting ecotourism projects and their sustainability. The iecotourism.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundations:

This research was supported by the following theories:

Social Influence Theory: This theory focuses on the influence of an act, action, or event on the behavior of individuals, and measures the size of this potential influence, linking the influence on the source of the influencer and its strength, as well as the extent of its proximity to the goal. The greater that strength is, the greater the influence will be.

The strength of social influence is controlled by the factors of rapid response to the event, and the size of the community to which the social influence will be applied. This theory has been used in research to understand the dynamic impact of the integration of media and artificial intelligence on a community represented by eco-tourists with the aim of influencing their behavior and shaping their views towards eco-tourism projects.

Sustainable Development Theory: The origins of this theory go back to the concept of sustainability in managing environmental resources, but the idea of sustainable development was highlighted in 1980 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Saayman, 2019). This theory focuses on the dimensions of the general concept of sustainable development, represented by the social, economic, and environmental dimensions. From the point of view of this theory, the environment constitutes an integrated economic entity and a developmental base, and any depletion of it weakens the opportunities for development. This theory has been used to clarify the integration of media and artificial intelligence in supporting the dimensions of development and maintaining the sustainability of environmental tourism projects.

Environmental Market Theory: This theory is of great importance in the media, especially with the increasing concern about environmental marketing activities. The beginnings of the interest in this topic go back to the late seventies, and the main idea on which this theory is based on is to achieve customer satisfaction in a sustainable way, and to go beyond traditional marketing through promoting basic environmental values and connecting consumers to those values and adopting them. Environmental marketing has shifted from focusing on the environmental context to more attention on sustainability issues in marketing efforts, as environmental marketing today focuses on the economic, social, and environmental context (Bulsara et al., 2021). This theory was used to determine appropriate marketing strategies to support the sustainability of ecotourism projects based on artificial intelligence media. The research is based on environmental marketing concepts to understand how economic projects can be marketed effectively using media and artificial intelligence.

Tourism Services Innovation Theory : This theory will be used to understand the role that media technology and artificial intelligence play in enhancing the tourist experience , increasing the attractiveness of eco-tourism projects , and increasing their competitiveness , as innovation is an important source for achieving competitive advantages and is closely linked to technology , whether in terms of improving

those existing services , or creating new services altogether (Hakseung Shin and Perdue, 2022). Since that the service innovation in the tourism industry is an important aspect as a strategic tool in which tourism companies seek to enhance innovation and adding high-quality value to their services (Hisniewski, 2001). In this regard, artificial intelligence technology is the key to this innovation of ecotourism services.

Theory of Artificial Intelligence: The theory of artificial intelligence was used based on the idea of information technology entering in all aspects of life. It has become a part of our daily lives and has gone beyond that to form a part of the way we travel. The use of this technology in the tourism industry is not new today, but dates to the late 1980s and began to develop with the development of the internet (Dimitra, 2017). In today's world, artificial intelligence in tourism media has a great ability to instantly interact with data and link it to eco-tourism sites and projects. This theory was used in this research to shed light on how artificial intelligence techniques can be integrated into data analysis to achieve accurate insights into tourists' behavior and their interaction with destinations and environmental tourism projects.

Methodology

Research Type:

This study is qualitative in nature and was structured according to the principles of the qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection relied on secondary sources, including reviewing previous studies, analyzing official reports, and referencing theories such as the Social Influence Theory and Sustainable Development Theory to explore the relationship between media, artificial intelligence, and the sustainability of eco-tourism in the UAE. This approach aligns with the theoretical descriptive-analytical nature of the study, focusing on examining and analyzing existing data rather than gathering new field data (Taufiq, Anshari, and Ramly, 2018).

Research Design:

The design of this study follows a qualitative descriptive framework that generates descriptive data in the form of spoken or written words. The aim of qualitative research is to seek or verify truth. In such studies, data is collected through various methods, and qualitative findings are expanded upon in textual form (Taufiq, Anshari, and Ramly, 2018).

Analytical Approach:

This study applied qualitative research analysis methodology through the following steps :

1 .Descriptive Analysis

Categories relevant to the research objectives were developed and analyzed .

2. Interpretation of Results

Findings from the descriptive analysis were interpreted in the context of appropriate theories.

Based on this approach, the data collected in this study was processed and interpreted qualitatively to address the research questions. Data was classified either as part of an existing theory or as supporting the descriptively constructed theoretical framework.

Integrating Artificial Intelligence Techniques into Tourism Media:

The media has always been considered a successful means of conveying news and an effective guide to the development of societies. With adaptation to current developments, the media has transformed a mere means into a powerful influence on the public. Since 2014, the Quakwbot robot has been used to write manuscripts in the Los Angeles Times newspaper, and then the technology of writing with intelligence has been passed on. Artificial intelligence and other media (Meng, Juanatas, and Niguidula, 2023) working with innovative ideas represents a contagious energy that swells with the accumulation of technological knowledge, and since artificial intelligence depends on huge data, processing capacity, and algorithms these elements of it have

developed with the accumulation of cognitive experience (Gidumal, 2022). Today, artificial intelligence is capable of analyzing and automating huge amount of data, and benefiting from it to improve marketing strategies, improve customers' perception of the product, understand their needs and requirements, as well as focusing on special group of them and following the strategy of focusing to create an effective competitive aspect (Majan, Mishra, and Tiwari, 2023).

When talking about tourism as an influential sector in the economy of countries and affected by technological changes, and with the transformation of economy of most countries into a digital economy, the initial effects of artificial intelligence in tourism can be found (Gidumal et al., 2023) . Here , we cannot ignore the role of the new media based on artificial intelligence , which constitutes the mediator between tourism that relies on its reports , tourists who make the decision to travel to destinations that were not known to them before , and society seeking to preserve its resources and achieve sustainable development (Kondala, 2017), as the new character of media refers to its use of number of digital methods and activities that allow the production , dissemination and consumption of media content in its various forms (Isik et al., 2022) in a tourist environment whose competition among its makers is becoming more intense day after day , innovation emerges as an inevitable necessity , especially with the tourist becoming an interactor . He expresses his opinion, searches for information that matches his inclinations, and chooses the amount of details he prefers to obtain. Here the traditional tourism media becomes useless , and the tasks of the new tourism media are determined accordingly in providing media campaigns that go beyond the elements of time and place and expand the geographical space of tourism markets .Achieving a balance between tourism supply and demand , by providing a data base that includes displaying the available ingredients in innovative ways that leave distinct impression on tourists based on their desires and tastes , and adopting smart technologies to contribute to predicting the future trend of this demand and working to achieve them(Kirtil, 2021). The integration of artificial intelligence with tourism media is characterized by its great ability to communicate interactively with data, and to carry out an effective link between data

and tourist sites in the destination country. It also contributes to doubling the profits of tourism institutions that rely on digital media by focusing on a specific category of tourists and targeting them. Through advertisement designed in a smart way to attract their attention, repeat their visit, and gain their loyalty in a sustainable way.

In general, introducing artificial intelligence technologies to the tourism media scene achieves the following benefits:

- _ Providing virtual tours, which are an innovative technology that allows tourists to move and interact within the tourist site and learn about the details of the place. Although these tours do not replace the tourist trip, they generate the desire to explore more and make the decision to head towards the tourist destination.

- _ Facing regional and international competitive challenges in conjunction with the multiple electronic communication channels, diversifying marketing strategies, searching for specialty in the tourism business market, and creating an important strategic position in the market.

- _ Maintaining the user's data and directing appropriate advertising to him according to his desires, as the smart tourist is characterized by his high requirements and the multiplicity of his channels. So, determining what he is looking for and creating content that suits his inclinations provides a degree of satisfaction and loyalty to him.

- _ Predicting the number of tourists and their preferences and working to achieve their desires and needs. Since Algorithms use symbols and codes that determine the user's needs from the search engine, which helps predict his requirements (Zancan, Passador, and Passador, 2023).

- _ Predicting changes that may occur in the tourism scene and responding to them quickly.

- _ The ability to persuade and attract many tourists, thus expanding the target tourism market.

- _ Improving the mental image of the tourist country.

- _ Displaying the tourism heritage in more attractive ways and promoting the most interactive tourism programs based on the data collected.

_ Extracting data, improving search methods, and shifting from the process of tourists searching for tourist areas and components to the process of attracting them, relying on search algorithms.

_ Matching tourist demand with the product provided in a way that benefits both tourists, organizations and tourism agents (Gidumal, 2022).

_ Designing enhanced tourism products and services that consider the aspirations and capabilities of tourists and presenting appropriate algorithms of price offers which is suitable to their buying capabilities, with the possibility of statistical review and dynamic pricing.

_ Media meditation between tourism and the host community, starting from visual arts to creating visual content.

_ Allowing creative media professionals to enhance efficiency and performance in their field of specialization.

_ Provides a reference base for decision-makers in the tourism industry and tourism businessmen to improve tourism performance and sustainability.

Eco tourism in The United Arab Emirates:

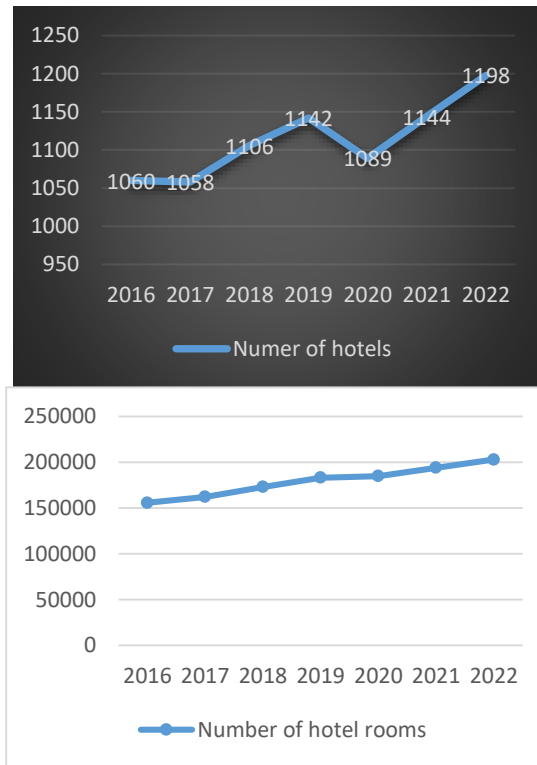
The tourism industry is witnessing rapid developments , and is affected by many variables that may push it towards progress or disappearance . This coincides with changes in the desires and requirements of tourists , who today have become more aware of the importance of this industry and the importance of preserving its components. A new trend has emerged for these tourists , represented by their pursuit of values and their orientation. Towards a tourism style based on nature (Abdul, Aziz, and Abd Rhman, 2013), accompanied by environmental awareness represented by awareness of the value of the inputs and outputs of this industry. This prompted many countries of the world to adopt new methods to preserve their environmental heritage (natural and cultural n)in order to have a great share in the tourism market and remain in the modern competitive field of the tourism industry. Perhaps ecotourism tourists on the first hand and preserves natural and cultural resources on the other hand , which has prompted many tourist countries to adopt projects for this type of tourism and to work hard to imbue it with various types of innovation and creativity .

Ecotourism constitutes an effective mechanism for sustainable development , as it is an export industry that has a prominent role in achieving sustainable development , working to achieve development goals and protect and sustain the environment .

Ecotourism was defined by the International Ecotourism Association in 1990 as responsible travel to nature areas that aims to preserve the environment and seeks to improve the quality of life in those areas (Honey, 2008), and thus the means of Achieving it depend on government Agencies in the destination . Tourism with its legislation and laws , sand its cooperation with the private sector in providing environmentally friendly tourist facilities and with the local community that supports it on the first hand , and with the practices of tourists on the other hand .

Tourism in the United Arab Emirates played a prominent role in its economy . It contributed to moving it from a country dependent on nonrenewable oil as the main source of its economy to a diversified economy in which the sustainable tourism economy formed an effective economic engine in raising living standards and increasing local income and gross product , as it constituted the contribution of the tourism sector . The rate of travel in 2022 is 9 % , and the United Arab Emirates has become one of the most international tourist destinations , occupying the 25th place globally in 2022 in the Travel and Tourism Development Index .This was accompanied by an increase in the number of hotel establishment annually , as well as hotel rooms , Figure (1) :

Figure 1. Number of hotels and hotel rooms in the United Arab Emirates (2016 – 2020)



<https://www.moec.gov.ae>

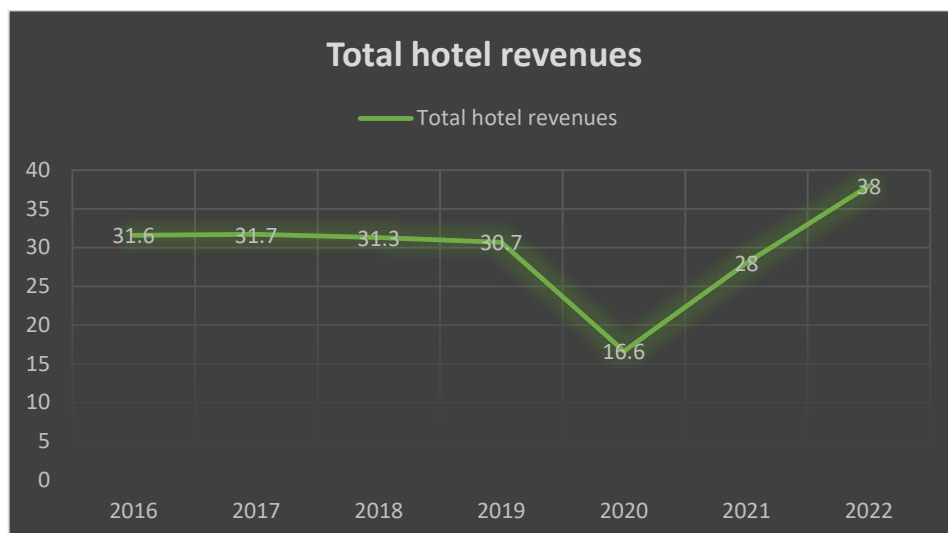
The previous figure indicates an increasing number of hotels in the United Arab Emirates , as well as hotel rooms , during the period (2016 – 2020) , and the chart for the number of hotels indicates an increase in their number from 1,060 hotels in 2016 to 1,198 hotels in 2022 . this increase in the number of hotels came in response to the increasing tourism demand in the UAE during this period Figure (2) ,
 Figure . 2 : Tourism Demand in the United Arab Emirates (2016 – 2022)



<https://www.moec.gov.ae>

The previous graph indicates that tourism demand in the United Arab Emirates was heading towards growth until the year 2020 , when tourism demand declined clearly due to the Corona pandemic , to return and recover in 2022 . This growing tourism demand was accompanied by an increase in the total revenues of hotels in the United Arab Emirates , Figure (3) :

Figure 3 : United Arab Emirates hotel revenues in the period (2016 – 2022) (billion Dirhams) .



<https://www.moec.gov.ae>

The rapid recovery of tourism demand for hotels in the United Arab Emirates and the accompanying noticeable increase in total hotel revenues after the Corona pandemic clearly indicates the government efforts being made in the field of tourism . It is worth noting that the United Arab Emirates is one of the leading countries in the field of tourism sustainability , as its tourism strategies adopt Development goals and the preservation of natural resources , starting from regulation to motivating important and private entities to implement sustainable development standards related to the environment , energy consumption , recycling , etc . The following table shows some of initiatives that contribute to enhancing the efficiency of sustainable ecotourism in the United Arab Emirates

Table .1 : UAE initiatives to enhance the sustainability of ecotourism :

The Initiative	Description	Source
Achieving climate neutrality by 2050	Reducing the pollutants that harm the environment to zero	https://wam.ae https://econoymidlist.com https://www.alethiad.ae
Launching the Green Group and Expanding Green Tourism Projects	- Shedding light on the environmental hotels - Reducing the pollutants that harm the environment	

An initiative of the Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi	Measuring the carbon emissions of the hotels and auditing on the power consumption	
Adopting Responsible and Sustainable Trends	Focusing on the creativity and the digital transformation in the tourism sector	
Power Tech digital platform	Observing all what is concerned with the variables which affect the environmental scales of the hotels	
Dubai initiatives	Dubai seal for the sustainable tourism which is given to the tourism facilities which commit to the sustainable standards Dubai takes the initiative : encouraging the use of water bottles which can be refilled	

- The importance of integrating artificial intelligence technologies into tourism media for ecotourism projects in the United Arab Emirates :

The process of integrating artificial intelligence technologies into tourism media for eco-tourism projects in the United Arab Emirates constitutes a major step in today's world , which is largely based on technological progress , as this process can be viewed as an integrated system , which is shown in the following figure :

Results:

Employing neural networks in tourism media contributes to analyzing huge amounts of data and facilitates the process of predicting the

number of tourists. It also provides the ability to be flexible and contributes to achieving a competitive advantage that supports ecotourism projects.

The adoption of smart agents in the tourism media provides media campaigns that go beyond the elements of time and place and constitutes the best promotional means for ecotourism projects. It also contributes to reducing routine procedures.

The employing of genetic algorithms in tourism media helps in translating results and predicting the inflation of the tourism market, and it contributes to improving the tourist experience.

The integration of media and artificial intelligence contributes in enhancing the sustainability of ecotourism projects in terms of promoting sustainable tourism practices, promoting the environmentally friendly products and services, and introducing cultures and civilizations to the host community .

These findings demonstrate a strong connection to the theoretical framework by integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into tourism media to enhance ecotourism sustainability. Aligned with Social Influence Theory, the use of AI tools—such as neural networks, expert systems, smart agents, and genetic algorithms—empowers media to tailor content, predict tourist behavior, and encourage sustainable practices, thereby influencing eco-tourist attitudes and behaviors effectively. Similarly, the results reflect the principles of Sustainable Development Theory, as AI technologies bolster the social, economic, and environmental aspects of tourism by fostering sustainable practices, promoting eco-friendly products, and preserving cultural and natural heritage.

Moreover, the findings resonate with Environmental Market Theory, highlighting how AI-driven tools enhance marketing strategies for ecotourism projects. By connecting consumers to environmental values through innovative and targeted campaigns, these technologies ensure customer satisfaction while supporting long-term sustainability. In line with Tourism Services Innovation Theory, the study showcases how AI-driven solutions improve service innovation, enhance tourist experiences, and strengthen the competitive edge of ecotourism projects through advanced, data-informed offerings. Finally, the study

aligns with the Theory of Artificial Intelligence, underscoring AI's role in real-time data analysis, predictive modeling, and seamless interaction between media and tourism sites, ultimately optimizing decision-making and ensuring the sustainable evolution of ecotourism projects.

Conclusion

This research explained the positive role that the integration of media and artificial intelligence can play in enhancing the sustainability of ecotourism projects , as this integration can be invested in encouraging sustainable tourism practices by tourism establishments and tourists altogether , and clarifying the benefits that can be gained from these practices , as well as this integration has a great ability to predict everything that may happen in the tourism scene and to quickly respond to changes that may occur , which means staying in the tourism market on the first hand , and preserving the tourism heritage on the other hand . Starting from this point , the research recommends the necessity of employing artificial intelligence techniques in tourism media , and providing an environment that allows benefiting from advanced technological tools in tourism media , so that it constitutes a mediation between tourism and society and provides distinctive presentations , starting from the visual arts to audio content , and employing these presentations for the benefit of enhancing the sustainability of tourism projects and preservation of the environment.

In conclusion, the findings of this research are highly significant and can contribute to the development of this vital sector.

The study makes a significant innovative contribution to the scientific literature by integrating media and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to enhance the sustainability of eco-tourism projects. This research provides an applied orientation through its focus on practical AI tools—such as neural networks, expert systems, and genetic algorithms—and their role in optimizing media campaigns and achieving sustainability goals. By taking the UAE as an inspiring model, the study bridges the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications, offering valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners in the fields of tourism and media.

However, this study acknowledges its reliance on secondary data as a limitation and suggests future research to include empirical field studies.

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